

SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT

Spiritual beliefs are closely related to the moral and ethical portion of the self concept and must be considered as part of the child's basic needs assessment. Children need to have meaning, purpose and hope in their lives. Also, the need for confession and forgiveness is present even in very young children. Extending beyond religion, spiritual affects the whole person: mind, body and spirit. James Fowler has identified seven stages in the development of faith; three of which are closely associated with and parallel cognitive and psychological development in childhood.

STAGE - 1 INTUITIVE PROJECTIVE FAITH Toddler and Preschool Ages 3-7 (Approximate)

This stage primarily is a stage of imitating the behavior of others. Children imitate the religious gestures and behaviors of others without comprehending any meaning or significance to the activities. If sins are washed away, then perhaps one can see the sins floating on the water after a baptism. The child becomes very upset when the adult rituals they have learned are interrupted or changed.

During the pre school years children assimilate some of the values and beliefs of their parents. Parental attitudes towards moral codes and religious beliefs convey children what they consider to be good and bad. Children still imitate behavior at this age and follow parental beliefs as part of their daily lives rather than through understanding of their basic concepts.

The danger of this stage is the fears inherent in a child's mind. A child may become terrified of hell and not be able to sleep, or an adult may use the fears of a child to manipulate the child into cooperation by de-



WHAT TO EXPECT FROM YOUR

4

YEAR OLD

AGES AND STAGES IN CHILD DEVELOPMENT

Each of us wonders whether our children are developing appropriately and if they're achieving as they should. These are guidelines on what to expect from your child at age three. Remember that these are only guidelines. Child development is not age-specific. Each child develops at his or her own special rate.

SOCIAL - EMOTIONAL

- ♥ View themselves as whole people, with a body, mind, and feelings.
- ♥ Are aware that they can be hurt physically, which sometimes causes them to be very sensitive about their bodies.
- ♥ Are interested in new experiences.
- ♥ Cooperate with other children and, with help, can negotiate solutions to conflicts.
- ♥ Alternate between being demanding and cooperative.
- ♥ Dress and undress themselves.
- ♥ May pretend to be a mom or dad during play.
- ♥ Are noticeably more independent.

Reference:

American Academy of Pediatrics (2004). Age three to five years. In SP Shelov, RE Hanne-
mann, eds., Caring For Your Baby And Young
Child: Birth to Age 5, 4th ed., chap 12, pp. 339-
388. New York: Bantam.

INTELLECTUAL - COGNITIVE

- 📖 Can say their first and last names.
- 📖 Understand the concept of counting and may know some numbers.
- 📖 Better understand concepts of time.
- 📖 Can name some colors.
- 📖 Understand the difference between things that are the same and things that are different.
- 📖 Are aware of their own gender and can identify the gender of others.
- 📖 Understand that events are connected, although their interpretation may not always be logical. For example, a child may understand the logic that glass may break if hit with a rock, but he or she may still throw the rock thinking that it won't break this time (magical thinking).
- 📖 Know the difference between fantasy and reality. However, they still play "pretend", which becomes increasingly inventive. They also may blur fantasy and reality when they are stressed or have extreme emotions. They may develop new fears as a result of their active imaginations.

LANGUAGE

- Use sentences of 5 to 6 words.
- Speak clearly enough for strangers to understand them.
- Have mastered some basic rules of grammar.
- Will describe something that has happened to them.
- Sing songs.
- Tell a short story as well as recall parts of a story.
- May go through a normal period (a few weeks) of repeating words or seeming to stutter.

PHYSICAL - MOTOR

- ➔ Hop and jump on one foot.
- ➔ Move forward and backwards easily.
- ➔ Can go up and down stairs without holding on to anything for support.
- ➔ Ride a tricycle or bicycle with training wheels.
- ➔ Throw a ball overhand and sometimes catch a bounced ball. They also can kick a ball forward.

By age 4, most children can use their hands and fingers, which are called fine motor skills, to:

- ➔ Build a tower of 10 blocks.
- ➔ Draw a circle and squares.
- ➔ Draw a person with 2 to 4 parts.
- ➔ Use scissors.
- ➔ Write some capital letters.